
Perforated Letterheads

Bob Schwerdt (505L)

Most perfin collectors have or have seen perfinned stationery, generally with the punch directly through the indicum, but occasionally elsewhere through the card or envelope. Owners of personal perforators are often willing to honor special requests of members who desire punched stamps and stationery.

Accompanying this article are seldom seen illustrations of a related sort: perforated letterheads of two prominent companies, American Perforators and B.F. Cummins Co. The Cummins letter is one sent to advertise its product. Attached to the letter but not visible in the illustration is a strip of 5 pink dummy stamps with the large BFC perfin (B106). Bulletin articles about perforators can be found in the Cumulative Index. I recommend the following which deal with history, personal experience, and illustrations of various machines: May 1970, Oct. 1973, Apr. 1988, and Jun. 1992.

What is unusual about the Cummins letter is the row of perfin designs at the bottom of the page with the explanation that the perfins are designs of "prominent concerns" existing in 1910 and most likely before that date. All of the designs are dated and identified in the U.S. perfins catalog with the exception of one, PD (P54), an A rated item.

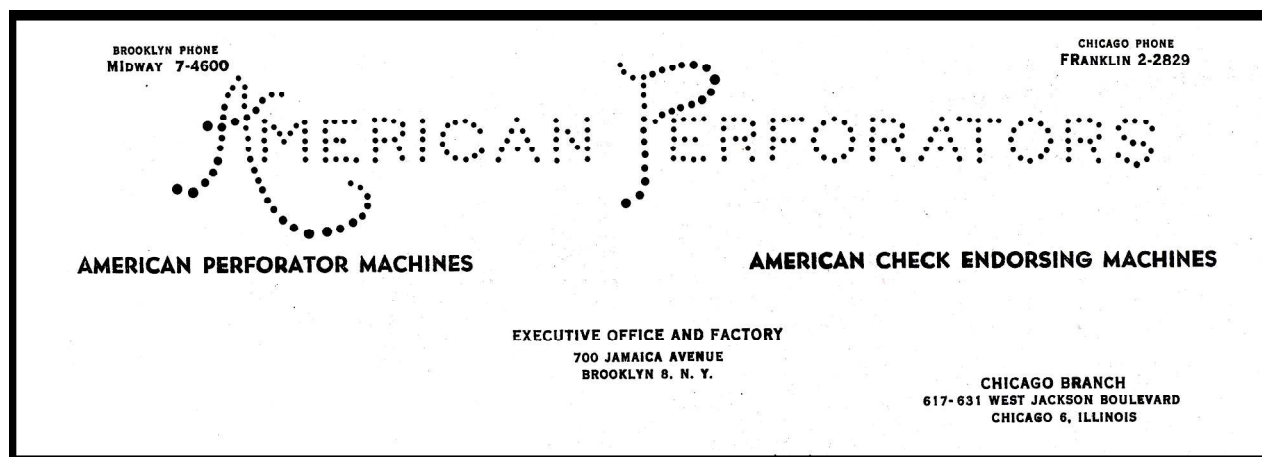
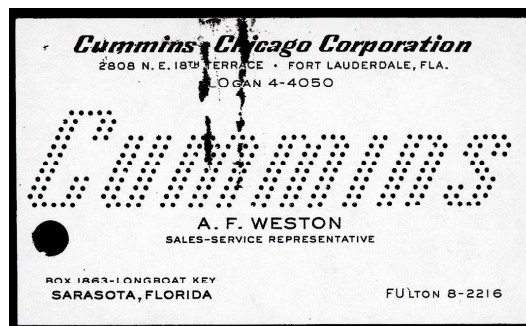
This lack of identity set me to thinking: what well-known companies in 1910, or thereabouts, would be identified with a P D

perfin? Logically, the next step was to check Adele Ottenheimer's listing, *Catalog of U.S. Perfins by Location*, of the large cities. The only name that frequently leaps out under "P" is the Parke Davis Co. There are many types of the P D perfins listed in the U.S. perfins catalog with code holes for the various cities. Could P54 be an early Parke Davis type that had limited use or was rejected in favor of the more individualized types? Can anyone think of other "prominent concerns" with PD initials?

Hopefully one day there will be a confirming cover to substantiate my reasoning. Until that time, whoever owns a copy of pattern P54 should check it for any town postmark, which may lead to further investigation.

Try to identify as many of the perfin types you can without checking the catalog!

P.S. Also illustrated is a business card of a Cummins sales rep. The company name is perforated. The stain is caused by a rusty paper clip.



B.F. CUMMINS Co.

Chicago +7-21-10

Are you sure that your Postage Stamps are not being stolen?

Many prominent concerns that considered their check on stamps effective have found an astonishing saving since they commenced perforating their stamps, as now permitted by the Post-office Department.

Such savings have brought to light the enormous traffic in stolen stamps that has been carried on for many years and of which little has been known or suspected.

There has been no way of identifying stolen postage stamps. Perforating them with private identification marks makes them unsaleable and removes from employes a demoralizing temptation.

Thousands of concerns are now using our machines for this purpose. We would be pleased to furnish you with full particulars and submit sketches of suitable designs for identifying your stamps. May we do so?

Our machines are very rapid. They perforate large quantities of stamps in a few minutes. The time and expense required for the work is insignificant.

For twenty years we have made a specialty of Perforating Machinery.

Very truly yours

THE B. F. CUMMINS CO.

Chicago.

Some Designs used by Prominent Concerns

W PD LV HAL AB LEW C NTE